

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of associating drivers and MFPs administering an MFP connected to a network comprising automatically discovering MFPs by a printer administration utility; building an MFP database comprising data regarding the MFP discovered by the printer administration utility; automatically discovering printer drivers by the printer administration utility, wherein the automatic discovering of printer drivers includes the discovery of updated drivers; automatically building, by the printer administration utility, a printer driver database comprising data identifying at least one MFP each printer driver is applicable to; automatically analyzing the MFP database and the driver database by the printer administration utility to determine allowable MFP/printer driver combinations; and automatically building a relationship database by the printer administration utility; ~~wherein the relationship database further comprises a first MFP record and a first printer driver record; and wherein the first MFP record and the first printer driver record are associated as an allowable combination;~~ wherein an allowable MFP/printer driver combination is a printer driver and at least one compatible MFP; and whereby the addition of either a new driver or a new MFP and automatic association is accomplished without manual administration by a user.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein discovering MFPs comprises using SNMP to locate and identify an MFP.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein building an MFP database comprises parsing standard printer MIB data
4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein discovering printer drivers comprises locating a printer driver file comprising metadata within a printer driver repository.
5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the metadata is XML metadata.
6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein the metadata identifies each MFP capable of being associated with each printer driver.
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein building the printer driver database comprises parsing the metadata.
8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein building a relationship database comprises creating a relational database with a many-to-many relationship linking a primary key of the MFP database with a primary key of the printer driver database for each allowable combination of MFP/printer driver relationships based upon MFP model and printer driver model compatibility.
9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising constraining the printer drivers prior to discovering the printer drivers.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising constraining the printer driver after discovering the printer drivers, and prior to building the printer driver database.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising constraining the associated MFP/printer driver combinations prior to building the relationship database.

12. (Currently Amended) A method of associating drivers and MFPs ~~administering MFPs~~ comprising automatically discovering and building an MFP database using SNMP Standard Printer MIB data for each MFP; automatically discovering printer drivers located on a network by a printer administration utility, wherein the automatic discovering of printer drivers includes the discovery of updated drivers; parsing XML data associated with each printer driver to build a printer driver database; and joining the MFP database and the printer driver database in a many-to-many relationship using the XML metadata for each printer driver to automatically identify compatible MFPs for each printer driver to produce an associated MFP/printer driver record for each allowable combination; wherein an allowable combination is a printer driver and at least one compatible MFP; and whereby the addition of either a new driver or a new MFP and automatic association is accomplished without manual administration by a user.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising constraining printer drivers prior to discovering printer drivers located on the network.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising constraining printer drivers after discovering printer drivers and prior to building the printer driver database.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising constraining allowable combinations of associated MFP/printer driver records prior to joining the MFP database and the printer driver database in a many-to-many relationship.

16. (Currently Amended) A system for associating available MFPs with available printer drivers comprising a general purpose computer means for processing data, wherein the computer processor means is adapted to connect to a network; a first means for automatically discovering MFPs connected to the network by a printer administration utility; a second means for building an MFP database comprising MFP data; a third means for automatically discovering printer drivers; a fourth means for automatically building a printer driver database by the printer administration utility; and a fifth means for joining the MFP database with the printer driver database in a many-to-many relationship to identify an allowable combination of a printer driver and an MFP; wherein an allowable combination is a printer driver and a compatible MFP; and whereby the addition of either a new driver or a new MFP and automatic association is accomplished without manual administration by a user.

17. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium encoded with a computer program for associating an MFP with a printer driver comprising a first software routine for automatically discovering an MFP; a second software routine for building an MFP database comprising data regarding the MFP discovered; a third software routine for automatically discovering a printer

driver, wherein the automatic discovering of the printer driver includes the discovery of an updated driver; a fourth software routine for automatically building a printer driver database comprising data identifying at least one MFP the printer driver is applicable to; and a fifth software routine for automatically building a relationship database; wherein the relationship database further comprises a first MFP record and a first printer driver record; ~~and wherein the first MFP record and the first printer driver record are associated as an allowable combination~~ and whereby the addition of either a new driver or a new MFP and automatic association is accomplished without manual administration by a user.